We claim:

1. Isolated nucleic acid encoding hepatitis B virus rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc or their complementary nucleic acids.

2. The nucleic acid of claim 1 which is human hepatitis B.

3. The nucleic acid of claim 2 which is intact infectious virus.

4. The nucleic acid of claim 2 which is about from 10 to 35 base pairs.

5. Nucleic acid encoding at least one of the hepatitis B virus mutants rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc, said nucleic acid being fused to heterologous nucleic acid.

6. Duck hepatitis B virus rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc.

7. A duck infected with duck hepatitis B virus rtN236T, rtA181V, rt181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc.

8. Woodchuck hepatitis virus rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc.

9. A woodchuck infected with woodchuck hepatitis virus rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc.

10. A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 1.

11. A host cell transformed with a vector of claim 10.

12. A method comprising culturing a host cell of claim 11 and recovering rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc therefrom.

13. A composition comprising (a) isolated hepatitis B virus mutant rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc and/or (b) hepatitis B virus mutant rtN rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc fused to a heterologous polypeptide.

14. The composition of claim 13 wherein the mutant is bound to a detectable label, bound to an insoluble substance, or formulated in a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

15. The mutant of claim 13 in an infectious hepatitis B virus.

16. An antibody capable of specifically binding rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc.

17. The antibody of claim 16 bound to a detectable label, bound to an insoluble substance or formulated in a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

18. A method for immunotherapy comprising administering to a subject a composition of claim 13.

19. A method for immunotherapy comprising administering to a subject the antibody of claim 16.

20. A method for the treatment of HBV comprising administering adefovir to a subject infected with HBV, determining whether the subject is infected with HBV rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc and, if so, administering to

the subject an anti-HBV drug to which the HBV mutant is not adefovir cross-resistant.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein the adefovir and the drug are administered substantially simultaneously to the subject.

22. The method of claim 20 wherein the drug is selected from the group consisting of entecavir, L-dT, MCC-478, FTC, L-dC, L-FMAU, L-Fd4C, Lamivudine and tenofovir.

23. A method for the prevention of emergence of rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc in a subject undergoing therapy for HBV comprising administering adefovir and at least one non-cross resistant anti-HBV drug.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein adefovir and the anti-HBV drug are administered substantially simultaneously.

25. A diagnostic PCR kit for the HBV mutants rtN236T, rtA181V, rtA181T, sL173F and/or sL172trunc comprising primers capable of specifically amplifying an HBV rt or sAg sequence containing at least one of said mutants.